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FOR THE CHRISTIAN'S MAGAZINE.

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The agreement and disagreement between true and false professors of Christ, illustrated from Heb. vi. 7, & 8.

THESE words are explanatory of the preceding verses. The apostle is describing the fate of apostates from the faith. It is impossible, says he, to renew them again to repentance; meaning by this, that the attempt of recovering them by the use of any means whatever, on the part of others, will be vain*. In giving them up as incorrigible, he proceeds: we act as men do in cultivating their fields. "For the earth which drinketh in the rain which cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God. But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned." In this view of the connexion of these words, they exhibit to us the agreement and disagreement between true and false professors of Christ.

First. Their agreement consists in their enjoying

* See Owen on Apostasy, and McKnight in loco.
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the same nature, the same external blessings, and the same external care.

1. They enjoy the same nature. As such, they are here compared to "the earth." Our Lord, in his parable of the sower, makes the same comparison. There is a peculiar appositeness in the comparison, because the human mind, like the earth, is susceptible of seed, and capable of cultivation. Besides this, men like earth after cultivation, produce fruit good or bad ; and their improvement will always be in proportion to the cultivation they enjoy. In this common nature then, this susceptibility of seed, and capability of improvement, true and false professors agree.

2. They also enjoy the same external blessings. This is expressed by the "earth drinking in the rain which cometh oft upon it." By the rain is represented to us the word of God, the doctrine of salvation. Thus the same term is applied in Deuteronomy, and not improperly : for as the rain comes from above, and fertilizes the soil, refreshing and quickening vegetation, so the word of God, the doctrine of salvation coming from above operates upon the soul of man. Through this word, either read or preached, the faith which is unto salvation is produced, as also all the graces accompanying faith, and evidencing love to God. Through the same word the divine life is preserved and revived, when in decay. Its influence is subtle and gentle, but powerful. It comes upon the soul as rain or showers upon the earth. This blessing, i. e. the word read or preached, both believers and unbelievers enjoy. It cometh oft upon them ; they have repeated opportunity of hearing it. Both may receive its truth, and confess its excellence. This is intended by the earth's *drinking* in the rain. The external act of reception in both is the same ; so is the confession of the mouth. They receive it as it is, indeed, the word

of God. False professors may receive it even with joy and satisfaction, as Herod heard John the Baptist, and as those did, in Christ's parable of the sower, who only believed for a season. All this drinking in of the rain, this hearing of the word, embracing it, apparently embracing it with joy, is common to true and insincere professors.

3. They also enjoy the same external care. The earth is dressed, or attended to, by the husbandman, or by the landlord, through the instrumentality of labourers. Thus true and false professors are equally attended to under the Gospel, in its external administration. The great husbandman of our fallen race is Jehovah. As such he is repeatedly represented by our Lord himself. He it is who uses workmen to dress his field. These workmen are chiefly the ministers of the Gospel. They exhort and admonish sinners: they entreat and supplicate them in God's name, to be reconciled to him. They offer the blessings and privileges of the kingdom of God to all indiscriminately, who will accept of them.

Thus far true and false professors agree. After this, they differ. The former resemble the earth, which bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, and receiveth blessing from God: the latter, that which beareth thorns and briers; is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.

II. How striking the difference, both as respects their improvement of the same blessings, and their end!

First. Their improvement of the same blessings is different.

1. Believers bring forth herbs meet for the dressers. That rain which descends oft upon them, and is drunk into their souls, fertilizes their natural barrenness. Originally they were unfruitful, void of good, like a desert. By the word, however, they are

made alive ; their barrenness is removed. The word is the seed of regeneration. This seed, through the kindly influences of divine grace, vegetates. The rain of the Gospel descends oft upon it, and it is made effectual by the Spirit of all truth. The same word which produces a change of heart, continues that change lively and operative. This last particular proceeds from the first, because, for the earth to bring forth herbs, pre-supposes their seed to be sown, and to vegetate. For any to bring forth fruit meet for repentance, pre-supposes repentance. To argue from this text, the power of man is futile. He must be changed by grace, before he can do any thing acceptable to God. When he is thus changed, he will improve divine blessings. He then resembles that earth on which the rain descending, is absorbed by it, and herbs spring from it. The seeds of those herbs have, however, been previously sown. When they spring up, they are dressed and cultivated by the husbandman, that they may be fit for his use. Thus the heart being renovated by grace, the evidences of this renovation appear.

The fruits of regeneration may be summed up under the two general heads of faith and holiness, the latter including obedience. These are fruits meet for the dressers, and none but these.

Faith is the first fruit, as well as evidence of regeneration. It is implanted in the soul at the very moment the change is experienced. The process is this. Faith cometh by hearing, hearing by the word of God. Thus, as the rain descends on the earth, the word does on the soul. By it, its natural hardness is softened. The husbandman ploughs the earth, strikes his furrows, deposits the seed. Jehovah, by his Spirit, through the word, breaks the sinner's heart, disposes it for the reception of the truth, and implants the truth therein. The preaching of the Gospel causes the seed to spring up. The principle of faith

produces the act of faith. The Lord Jesus is known, acknowledged, and embraced, as the only Saviour. His righteousness is apprehended—self is denied—the merit and efficacy of good works disclaimed—the merit and efficacy of Christ's death alone, realized as the ground of acceptance before God, by the penitent sinner. Faith in Jesus includes faith in the Gospel and in Gospel promises, together with an unqualified confidence in Jehovah's faithfulness. The Gospel is received by him who possesses this faith, as the only standard of right and wrong: its principles, as the principles of truth, the yea and amen of duty. Hence his natural corruption, his alienation from God, Christ's dignity and all-sufficiency, the Spirit's almighty agency, are all to him acknowledged truths, because bible truths. Reason is made subordinate to revelation, and that for this simple, conclusive cause, that reason is dark and corrupted. It once was the regulator of the life, but through sin it has become the minister of the passions. Who are they who boast the strength of their reason, and despise the light of the Gospel, but the slaves of their passions and appetites? Before reason can regulate the life, it must be enlightened by the grace of Jehovah. Then, and not till then, does it answer for a guide in the path of duty.

A consequence of faith, is holiness, including obedience, another fruit as well as evidence of regeneration, produced by the same cause. This is that conformity of the heart and life to the will of Jehovah, which is well-pleasing in his sight. Sin is hated; its first risings repressed; its dominion slain; the will is subordinate to God's will; the appearance of evil is avoided; the very garments spotted with iniquity shunned. Sin is abhorred for its own sake; holiness loved for its intrinsic excellency; our corrupt desires are detested; the gratification of the passions loathed; sinful thoughts are strangled in

their birth; and because the heart is kept with all diligence, out of it are the issues of life. Hence the walk and conversation are holy. The last is seasoned with the salt of the Gospel; it is chaste and pious. The topics are useful and serious. Filthiness, foolish talking, idle jesting, are avoided. The conduct is consistent; the life a life of faith; the walk a walk of faith. The believer performs the duties he owes to God, to himself, and to his fellow-mortals, with promptitude and faithfulness; he attends upon the worship of God in public and private, with cheerfulness; speaks reverently of Jehovah; reproves gainsayers; strengthens the feeble minded. Honouring God, and loving him with all his heart, he displays the same in his conduct. He attends to his own soul, examining it, enlightening himself, and directing himself through the appointed means in the ways of righteousness. He does good to all, as far as he can. He acts justly, loves mercy, is charitable, humane, generous in his dealings. He does not deceive; pays his honest debts, though he himself by so doing should be clothed in rags: for a man who defrauds his creditors, and lives well of their money, is no Christian. No case under heaven will justify such conduct. The believer, in short, does unto others, as he would wish to be done by, himself under similar circumstances.

These fruits are meet for them by whom the earth is dressed. Like the harvest of the husbandman, which fills him with joy if abundant, so faith and holiness, including obedience, where they are evinced, are sources of comfort to all God's ministers, and tend to the glory of God. None but these fruits are meet for the honest servants of Jesus. None but these repay them. Personal reputation, worldly honour and ease, the kindness and pointed attention of friends, riches, and such like, are poor compensations to that minister who loves Jesus and

precious souls, if he sees no other fruits of his labours, no increase of faith and holiness in his flock. These are the fruits which satisfy his mind, for these are the fruits which tend to glorify his dear and exalted master.

Both these must be taken in connexion. There can be no faith without holiness, and no holiness without faith. Religion is the mother of morals. The first includes the last, and is something more. Morality merely regards external actions. Religion looks to the motives and principles of these actions. Where grace is, there, must be the purest morals. There is not, there cannot be, faith without good works. The one is the foundation of the other, and both are evinced where fruit meet for the dresser is brought forth.

2. How different from this the improvement of false professors; they bring forth thorns and briers. These denote the opposite to faith and holiness; they are expressive of barrenness, of an unthankful heart. They are a general expression for all kinds of weeds. What more dreary or more frightful, than a field covered by these? What more painful than to pass over it? What more avoided?

By these thorns and briers are denoted the principles, the conversation and conduct of carnal nature. To bear thorns and briers, is to answer God's kindness, care, and love with hardness of heart and unbelief, with unfruitfulness and unthankfulness, with bitterness, ridicule, apostasy, persecution. Between all these there is a natural connexion. The one leads to the other. A life of ungodliness is not generally commenced at once in all its excesses. The abuse of mercies engenders ingratitude; ingratitude ends in apostasy; the spirit of apostasy is persecution. How aptly are these ungodly fruits compared to thorns and briers! Like them, they spring spontaneously, without care, from the corruption of our nature. They

are, like them, deep-rooted, and require great trouble to be removed. Like them they are interwoven one with the other, and increase rapidly and abundantly. Like them they are useless, nay, pernicious, injuring those who rear them, wounding them, and occasioning death. Like them they hinder growth of sound principles around them, and the reception of grace in the heart. Such are the fruits of insincere professors—of apostates. So different is the improvement of the same blessings by true and false professors.

Secondly. Their end is different.

1. Believers bringing forth herbs meet for the dressers, are blessed by God. They meet with his approbation. He smiles upon them, and grants them peace. He increases their fruitfulness, and causes them to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Their views are enlarged, their faith strengthened, their love is made more ardent, their obedience more general, their holiness more complete. They die unto sin, they live unto righteousness. They go from strength to strength, till they appear before God in Zion. God shines upon them in their way, and encourages them. Their trust in Jesus becomes more unqualified; their crucifixion to the world, and devotion to God more evident. They evince more and more spiritual and heavenly mindedness. They walk with God in the cloudy day of adversity, as well as in the sunshine of prosperity. Thus the believer is blessed by receiving gifts and graces from Jehovah. In this is an exceeding great reward. But great as it is here, it is imperfect. Hereafter it will be perfect. Blessed through life, he is blessed also in death. Its sting is removed. Blessed in death, he is blessed in eternity; entering into his rest, enjoying peace, happiness, and unbounded pleasure with God and his Christ.

2. False professors, on the contrary, bringing forth

thorns and briers, meet an awful fate ! They are rejected, i. e. disapproved, laid aside as a field which, after repeated trials, still produces weeds. God withdraws his blessings, and charges his providences not to affect them, nor his Gospel to soften their hearts. His patience is exhausted, his long-suffering worn out to the last exercise. Ephraim is joined unto idols ; let him alone, is his language towards them. Ministers of the Gospel, and believers, no longer take care of them. Seeing their unfruitfulness, they refrain from counselling them, or warning them. They are rejected as past remedy by God or man.

They are nigh unto cursing. The earth, which, though cultivated and blessed with rain, produces only thorns and briers, is not only laid aside, but is thrown open, and exposed to desolation. They who abuse Gospel blessings, are given over to themselves, to the misrule and tyranny of their passions and lusts. These lead them captive at pleasure, and make them miserable in their own hearts, as well as in their social connexions. They are nigh unto cursing ; unto that state wherein it shall not be known that they have ever enjoyed Gospel blessings. Every restraint is removed. Conscience becomes callous. Appetites grow furious. Sin rages in them, and hastens on their destruction.

Their end is to be burned. They die impenitent, and lift up their eyes in everlasting torments. As thorns and briers are collected and burnt, so they will be gathered together and cast into the lake of fire, where weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth shall for ever prevail.

Such is the awful judgment which Jehovah denounces upon those who, under the cultivation and rain of the Gospel, bring forth unto the end, ungodly fruits. These are not only the openly wicked, but those also who sin in secret, seeking to hide their vices from the public ; nay, even those who are moral

and unexceptionable before the world, but strangers to the grace of Jesus. These last, though amiable and attractive in our eyes, bring forth no fruit meet for repentance. Their principles and motives are not correct. They do not honour God supremely, nor realize God's presence. They do not obey the law cheerfully and universally. They do not seek to have their hearts right with God. They are selfish, seeking and finding their gratification in their own feelings, their good character, their happiness, whilst God is forgotten, and Jesus Christ slighted. But let us descend to a few particulars.

1. Baptized persons, who slight their baptismal engagements, bring forth thorns and briers. They may indeed, acknowledge the excellence of the Gospel, but yet they do not conform their lives to it. Their hearts are unchanged, and their practice is unreformed. They neglect the great duties of prayer, and self-examination, and constant dependance on the grace of God. Concerning all baptized persons, God has promised to his Church, that out of them he would always raise up a seed to serve him. They who neglect to fulfil their baptismal engagements, cast contempt on this promise, and reject an interest in God's kingdom.

2. Prayerless heads of families bring forth thorns and briers. Such are meant who enjoy the preaching of the Gospel; on whom the rain descends, and who drink it in, listening to the word and approving it, and yet call not on the Lord, neither honour the God of their salvation. In these families, the Bible is neglected. Children and servants grow up in ignorance of essential truth, and come out into the world unprepared to resist temptation, and disqualified for the service of God.

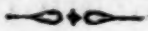
3. Immoral professors of Jesus, bring forth thorns and briers. They are meant, who, notwithstanding their immoralities, retain their profession.

They say, Lord, Lord, to Jesus, whilst they sacrifice to their lusts, and keep up appearances with the world. They have little of Christianity about them but the name.

All these will be rejected and nigh unto cursing, and their end will be, to be burned. *This is no delusion, no fanaticism, but is sober truth.*



FOR THE CHRISTIAN'S MAGAZINE.



THE DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION.



And the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.—1 Cor. xv. 52.

(Continued from page 16.)

II. **W**E shall now examine the objections of unbelievers.

Founded upon the evidence already stated, our faith remains unshaken by the storms which assail it. Faith is the gift of God ; a supernatural living principle. The assent which it involves is, notwithstanding, an intelligent and a rational assent. It is *intelligent*, and excludes ignorance. We know what we believe. It is *rational*, for we do not believe any thing which is self-contradictory, or which is really inconsistent with evident truths. The articles of our faith do not repel, but invite investigation.

It is a duty from which we do not shrink, to expose those subtle sophisms with which men, otherwise respectable, may have opposed this part of the

Christian doctrine. The Redeemer deigned to listen to the pitiful objections of the Jewish Saducee, and to expose, in the presence of a vast assembly, the ignorance and infidelity from which they derived their origin. It would be a presumption which the intelligent would ascribe to the true cause, ignorance or indolence, were we always to evade the objections of infidels, under pretence of despising them. We owe it, moreover, to the rising generation, to defend the doctrines of the Gospel. The unwary youth, enamoured of a literary reputation, is readily entangled in the snares of unbelief, urging objections to his creed to which he cannot reply. Ashamed of his credulity, he gives up truths which he had implicitly embraced, and which having never examined, he has not ability to defend.

The doctrine of the resurrection is defensible. We believe it upon the authority of God's word, and we defend it by rational arguments, against every attack. We invite the unbeliever, in all the lustre of literary endowments, and in all the force of a genius improved by philosophy, to make the attack.

“Of the hope of the resurrection of the dead are we now called in question,” and we may use the words of the apostle to the judge, before whom he stood accused, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?”

1. “The body after death is decomposed; it is separated into atoms: these atoms are widely scattered. Some bodies are torn by vultures. These vultures are devoured by other birds of prey. Some are cast into the sea, and become food for fishes; and these are again devoured by the larger inhabitants of the deep. Some are destroyed by worms, which are in their turn devoured by other animals. Some are reduced to ashes; and these

“ashes are given to the winds. The particles of
“matter thus undergoing ceaseless changes, it is
“incredible that the component atoms of the body
“should be re-assembled into one whole, and re-ani-
“mated, after the lapse of years.”

This is one objection to the doctrine of the resurrection, which unbelievers offer. They infer from such premises, that it is incredible. But wherefore incredible? Is it on account of the *time* which shall have elapsed between the decomposition of the body, and the re-union of its parts? Is it on account of the *distance* to which one part shall have been removed from another? Is it on account of the *changes* which the atoms undergo in a separate state? or is it rather, because, by the *multitude of words*, their own ideas become confused, and they attribute their own perplexity to Jehovah?

Remember, it is God that raiseth the dead. What effect can the *lapse of years* have upon an understanding which is infinite, which admits of no succession of thoughts, no derangement of ideas; with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years?

The *extent of space* over which the component particles of bodies are scattered, can present no difficulty to their re-union. What comes of the idea of space, in the view of an omnipresent spirit? God is every where. He is continually present with every atom of creation. He is infinitely acquainted with every change it undergoes. What difficulty can distance between the parts, cause to a re-union of those parts by the infinite power of an omnipresent God?

The component parts of each of our present bodies, have been already as far separated as they can be hereafter. Where have these particles been revolving for several thousand years before this day? From the air and the vapour, from the earth, and

from the deeps of the sea, from every quarter of the world, and from every element, have these atoms been collected, which constitute each of our present bodies. Did these atoms, driven by chance, enter into our organization? Is chance our creator and God? Assuredly it shall be as easy for infinite power and intelligence to re-organize these parts at the resurrection, as it has been to assemble them in the place which they now occupy. The extent of the separation which shall take place after death, cannot be an obstacle.

The *change* which the parts of which the human body is composed shall undergo, cannot disguise them from the divine knowledge, or render them incapable of reduction to their former relation to one another.

The various particles of matter are undergoing constant revolutions and changes in their sensible qualities. Some of these changes are obvious to man; but all are within the comprehension of omniscience. Change the parts of a human body as you will; let fancy, unbounded, lend her aid to the transmigrations; still they cannot escape the vigilance of omniscience, nor baffle the power of omnipotence, to reclaim them to their former standing. A grain of corn is cast into the earth: it rots; it undergoes decomposition; it sprouts; it grows; it ripens in the ear: it is still corn. And who enacted and executed the laws by which this seed impresses its own qualities upon the matter collected from the different elements? It is Jehovah: God giveth the increase. Shall we doubt the fact because we cannot imitate it? Gold, that precious metal for which thousands sell their honour, their conscience, their souls; gold is scattered in the dust; enters into the composition of vegetables; is reduced to ashes; is dissolved in acids and alkalies; is drunk by men as was the calf of Aaron in the wilderness; is combined

with several metals: and, nevertheless, is capable of being reclaimed even by the art of man to its former lustre. And shall we deny to the eternal God the power of reclaiming the bodies of the saints, because they have entered into a variety of different combinations with other atoms of matter? No. We cannot deny it, without ascribing imperfection to the divinity—without becoming atheists. Why then, I repeat the question, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?”

2d Objection. “The human body is subject to continual change. It is worn down by its own vital action. It is emaciated by disease. Its particles are continually expelled by the exhalent arteries. The absorbents remove bone, ligament, every part of the body, even the most solid. In a few years the whole is changed. A new body is formed by the aliment which we daily receive. Every ten years presents a body in every particle distinct from the former. A man of an hundred years of age has accordingly had ten distinct bodies. With which of these shall he arise? Shall he be restored to the possession of them all? Our bodies moulder into dust, are transformed into soil, become incorporated with vegetables, and, as the food of animals, become the flesh of other creatures. These are again the component parts of other human bodies. There are also cannibals. What has been a part of one man to-day, becomes a part of another to-morrow. Whose shall these parts be at the resurrection? The same particles of matter may have been the ingredients of fifty different bodies in the progress of time. Thus a resurrection implies a contradiction, and is of course not an object of divine power. We are constrained by the knowledge of facts to reject the doctrine and the system, of which it is an essential part.

“Therefore do we think it incredible, that God
“should raise the dead.”

The objectors believe, then, that the doctrine of the resurrection involves a contradiction; and therefore it is incredible. What must be their opinion of Christians? Some of them, they must acknowledge, are as well acquainted with the facts which they state, as is any unbeliever. They are as well versed in history, in medicine, in reasoning, and in every department of literature, as their opponents can pretend to be. They are, moreover, as consistent, as conscientious, as virtuous, and as much to be depended on, as any set of men. Is it supposed that such characters are all hypocrites, or that they contradict the first principles of common sense, by giving faith to palpable contradictions? Or rather, does not modesty constrain to the belief, that intelligent Christians are capable of proving, that no fact contradicts their doctrine?

Let no one think, however, that we intend to shield ourselves under the authority of names from the weapons of objectors. Objections of science, falsely so called, are never of difficult solution. The knowledge which raises the objection may, under Christian direction, with equal ease put it down.

No. We do not embrace contradictions, or give credit to impossibilities: and the objectors shall be themselves our witness to this truth.

Whatever changes the body may undergo, personal identity continues from the birth to the tomb. The body which dies, is that which shall arise. Every thing which enters at any time into the body is not essential to it; and if we should multiply a hundred fold, the race of cannibals, and the probabilities of the parts of one body becoming at some time the parts of another body, still there is matter enough in existence to furnish distinct bodies for all men; there is knowledge enough in Jehovah, to distinguish the portion be-

longing essentially to each, and the energy of omnipotence is still sufficient to raise the dead.

The body certainly undergoes many important changes in the animal economy, from the time of its birth, until the hour of death. Matter is daily expelled from the system, and new matter is introduced into its organization. Whether any entire part, or all the parts of this delicately constructed frame, be completely renovated in the course of a certain number of years, is merely conjectural, and is of no consequence whatever in this investigation. The body is still the same, so far as we are concerned with its identity. A son, born twice ten years ago, has not ceased once to be a son: his mother still recognizes him as the child of her womb, nourished at her breast, and nursed upon her knee. A wife has been emaciated by lingering illness, and has happily recovered the bloom of health. Has the marriage covenant been annulled by the change, or need the husband apprehend that he only embraces a stranger, to whom he has never been wedded? The civil law seizes upon a murderer, who had for ten years escaped the justice which pursued him. Shall he be acquitted at the bar, on the supposition that he is not now the same person, with him that committed the atrocious deed? The veteran whose arm was shattered in the defence of his country, receives a pension for his support. Shall it be denied that he is the same person who shed his blood in the support of freedom? No. The objection is not the statement of a *fact* opposed to the doctrine of the resurrection. It is the introduction of a principle which, in its operation, would totally eradicate all the social affections, derange the laws of property, and destroy public order; which would confound praise and blame, reward and punishment, and effectually annihilate the distinction between virtue and vice.

The body which dies, is that which shall arise.

Enoch carried into heaven the earthly tabernacle in which his spirit dwelt at the hour of his departure from this world. Elijah, with the body which passed over Jordan, was borne aloft, leaving only his mantle to his faithful follower, Elisha. Those who have been laid in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and live. He who is our resurrection and our life, was quickened in the same body which the benevolent Joseph had laid in his own tomb. That body saw no corruption, and it still retained the impressions of the nails, and of the spear wherewith cruelty had torn the flesh of our crucified Saviour. They, too, who shall live on earth, when the last trumpet shall announce the end of time, will carry with them into their eternal rest, the bodies in which they shall have heard that solemn sound.

Nor can the existence of cannibals, or the uses to which the component atoms of the bodies of the dead, may have been in the mean put, prevent Jehovah from the execution of his declared purpose of raising all the dead to life.

Voyagers and travellers love the marvellous. Philosophers are equally prone to give credit to strange accounts. There is no nation under heaven, which eat, as ordinary food, human flesh. Revenge or necessity may have occasionally driven miserable man to devour a morsel of the body of his brother. The confusion of parts which this produces, must be very small. Every particle of body is not essential to it. If another has accidentally swallowed a drop of my blood, can we not still be distinguished? The faint and thirsty soldier has drunk the blood of a wounded companion on the field of battle, and both have recovered perfect health. Are they not still two distinct persons? And shall not God, at the resurrection, distinguish the body of one from that of another? Disguise this objection as you will, it is founded upon a limitation of the divine attributes.

Shall the objections to the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, be rested upon the several uses to which its inanimate particles may be put between death and the resurrection? The wisdom of God in this ought rather to be admired. So long as every particle is directed by omniscience, no difficulty can arise from the uses which they may be made to answer. God arranges all the atoms of matter in the universe with more ease than we can combine the letters of the alphabet, or distinguish the gold from the silver in our coffer. He watches over the revolutions of a single particle, as well as over the changes of a great empire. In the multitude of uses which the elements answer, they are not lost, nor disqualified from appearing again in their original form. Light enters into the constitution of vegetables. It is again exhaled, and becomes an ingredient of the vital air. It is restored, in the process of combustion, to its original brightness, and illuminates our habitations. And shall not that God who directs *its* course, collect and re-animate the bodies of the saints, purchased by the Redeemer, and predestinated to shine in heaven with perpetual glory? Should even all the particles of matter which exist upon the surface of the globe, after all the numerous uses in which they have been employed, be necessary to the re-organization of the bodies of men, it would only be an additional illustration of the principle, that infinite wisdom has done nothing in vain.

(To be continued.)

FOR THE CHRISTIAN'S MAGAZINE.

*Letter from Mrs. Harriet Backus.*

My dear S——

Canaan, Dec. 20, 1801.

I RECEIVED your letter in October, at a time when ill health prevented my answering it by the only opportunity I have had to convey a letter. Your own heart would not let you accuse me of neglect from motives of indifference, I am certain; and you have charitably accounted for my silence. To hear that you are, or was really anxious, my dear friend, for your eternal welfare, created a sensation, that at once both pleased and pained me. I have myself felt too sensibly the horrors of an awakened conscience, to feel any joy at the reflection of such misery in others; but as I view a sense of our lost, undone situation, both by nature and practice, a necessary prelude to salvation, I am ever glad to hear that any of the slumbering creation to which I belong, are awaking from a sleep, that, if continued, will prove the sleep of eternal death.

My dear S——, you apply to a poor, stupid, ignorant sinner for direction, or advice, in things of eternal moment. I can only refer you for solid help, to those immutable counsels which, in divine mercy, are revealed in the blessed volume of inspiration. Those truths, my dear ——, have stood the tests of all ages, though the cavils of deists, the shafts of infidels, and the satire of wicked men, have ever been pointed against them. And they will stand, when time is done, and nature is no more: for the finger of God, the pencil of the Almighty, has engraven them, and vain are the efforts of impiety. But from the perusal of this book arises your perplexity. “Great is the mystery of godli-

ness; and as the heavens are high above the earth, God's ways are higher than our ways, and his thoughts, than our thoughts." We must be particularly careful how we allow infidelity or skepticism to take root in our hearts, for they are a soil more natural to the growth of evil, than of good. I believe, that all the ways of God to man are not only perfectly justifiable, but perfectly wise, just, and good: still there are mysteries I cannot develope. Conscience whispers, I am a worm of the dust; and God is the Almighty, the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end of wisdom. And shall I scrutinize, shall I scan, or dare to judge between him and his works? Trembling with astonishment, I bow, I believe, adore, and worship; blessing his holy name for the hope, through faith in Christ, that when this "mortal shall put on immortality," and this renovated nature is enlarged in capacity to receive the truths as they exist, I shall behold him face to face, listen to the wonders that shall be revealed, when "the lamb, who alone is worthy to break the seals," shall take the book, and to the whole collected universe, while all shout loud hosannas, unfold these mysteries of ages.

My dear S——, it is of the utmost importance, that we give heed, and take these things into consideration: for shortly all else will fail us but these. We must look with the clearness of faith, and the dispassionate eye of reason. Faith, however, is the only assistant in dispelling the clouds of doubt and uncertainty that lie betwixt time and vast eternity; it carries us above the perplexities of life; it is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. Oh! I had rather have one hour of the humble Christian's faith, than all the syllogisms of the most learned metaphysicians. We are warned not to pry into things beyond our depth, for "secret things belong to God." There is enough revealed for us to know and practise. "Hear, and your

souls shall live ; keep my commandments and inherit eternal life," is the language of Scripture. Let the Creator of worlds, my dear friend, still keep the key of mysteries, and let us glorify his name, and thank him, that of plain and easy truths he is so very bountiful.

The difficulty in your mind seems to be, why a God of infinite perfections did not create all to everlasting happiness. Have we not more reason, my dear —, to inquire, Why any ? Let us look at our creation ; was it not after the image of our maker ? And at our apostasy ; was it not our sin, our fault, and ours alone ? Then at the wonders of redemption ; that wonder of heaven and angels ; and is not the wonder greater, why any should be saved ; why one soul should be snatched from death as a brand from the burning, and quenched in the blood of God himself, than that any should be lost ? If we would wonder, the mercy of God is theme sufficient to employ us through time and through eternity. Let us be careful, then, my beloved friend, that we grieve not the holy Spirit, by "replying against God. Let us rejoice, that he doeth what he will with his own : " for there is our only hope. The sovereign mercy of Jehovah is all that can save us from perdition. Let us fear, love, and "serve him all our days ; then go dwell for ever near him, see his face, and sing his praise."

That you and I, with the whole Israel of God, may be kept by his power, through faith unto salvation, is the prayer of, &c.



An extract of a Letter.

Pittsfield, Jan. 13, 1801.

ALL things are ordered right, my beloved friend ; and however our little plans of anticipated enjoy-

ment may be frustrated, we have sweet consolation in the conviction, that the government of this world is conducted with infinite wisdom. The mind that feels this, and can glory in it, is not ruffled by the boisterous wind, nor saddened by the drizzling shower. It can witness the storm of elements; view nature clothed in her gloomiest vesture, and still smile serenely. "Its peace is inward, and its joys its own." Happy the man who can rise superior to the changing scenes of this changing world; whose hands and heart lay hold of that "sure foundation, which shall never be removed;" whose countenance displays the calm irradiations of heart-felt piety; and whose soaring eye can look abroad with equal complacency in the sunshine and the storm, and smiling, say, "My Father made them all!" This state of bliss is attainable here: the heart of your friend can witness it, and at the reflection, dissolve in gratitude to the Saviour of sinners. Oh, dear-bought bliss! wonderful salvation! which was purchased for us by the death and sufferings of our dear Redeemer.

My dear Mrs. W——, now indeed can we taste the delight of sympathy—sympathy of love—love to our God, and his blessed service! How consoling the thought! How dear to friendship the idea, that death cannot quench the flame! O that all the world could taste the pleasant stream that is flowing for them! That we could unite, not only with those most dear to us, but with the earth's great family, in the sweet worship of our Father and our God!

FOR THE CHRISTIAN'S MAGAZINE.



A brief Inquiry into the lawfulness of marrying a deceased wife's sister.

THE law of marriage is positive. No *general principle* can, *of itself*, establish, with a binding force upon the conscience, the doctrine, that “the
“ conjugal union is, in all cases, to subsist between
“ one man and one woman only; and, with the ex-
“ ception of conjugal infidelity, is to last during the
“ joint lives of the parties.” Nothing but a divine *institution* could subject them to this condition: nothing but a divine *revelation* communicated the knowledge of it.

Again: There is no general principle; no reason from the nature of things; nothing but such an institution, so revealed, which can limit the right of contracting marriage with respect to the *degrees of kindred*. The marriages which immediately succeeded that of the first pair, were evidently between brothers and sisters. Unless parents had married their children, it could not be otherwise, without the creation of different races. And these marriages of brothers with sisters were *lawful*. God, the holy and the just, could not, by his own act, lay upon men a physical necessity of sinning against him. But that which is lawful in itself cannot become unlawful without the intervention of the legislative power; i. e. in the case before us, without the intervention of God himself by a positive statute. The conclusion is, either that there are no restrictions of marriage at all in the article of kindred, or that they are to be sought for in the Scriptures. The first branch of the alternative will hardly be embraced by any sober-minded Christian. Our inquiries are, therefore, confined to the second; that

is, to the question of fact; viz. *What has God determined in his word?*

On this point the New Testament implies much, but has nothing formal. We must, then, go back to the Old Testament, or else adopt the branch of the alternative which we have just rejected, viz. that there are no restrictions at all.

The most explicit regulations are in the 18th chapter of the book of Leviticus; out of which two questions arise.

1. Is the law of marriage therein prescribed binding upon *us*? So that the degrees forbidden to the Jews are equally forbidden to all mankind?

2. Supposing this law to be thus universal and permanent, does it include and forbid the marriage of a deceased wife's sister?

Materials for a right decision of both seem to be within a very narrow compass. With regard to the former, I remark,

1st. If the restrictions in the 18th of Leviticus are no part of moral law *now*: if they are not of universal and permanent obligation, there is no written law, no divine statute, upon the subject. Consequently, a man is at liberty to marry his sister, his mother, or his daughter; and the converse. This, I believe, would shock all Christian feeling and conscience. Incest, be it remembered, is not a crime against nature, or natural law. It is a crime against *positive* law, and against positive law *only*. If you discard the law of marriage, as laid down in Levit. 18.; and yet contend that there is such a thing as *incest at all*, let the law which it violates be produced.

2d. Immediately subjoined to the specification of degrees within which marriage might not be contracted, are the following injunction and reason:—
“Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these things the nations are defiled which I

cast out before you, and the land is defiled ; *therefore do I visit the iniquity thereof upon it*, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants." Lev. 18. ver. 24, 25.

But the Canaanites never were under the law of Moses ; therefore their sin must have been committed against a law prior to, and more general than, the Mosaic dispensation : the righteous God never makes *ex post facto* laws. Now, what law could equally bind the seed of Canaan and the seed of Abraham ; the Hittite and the Hebrew ; the people who were within, and the people who were without, the covenant of peculiarity,—equally bind them in a matter in which *all mankind have a common interest*, and will continue to have it so long as there shall be male and female, but a law which binds men universally ? It is only because the law reached to the whole human family, that it embraced the inhabitants of Canaan.

If any one object, that ' the " defilement" of the ' Canaanitish nations, comprehended their disregard ' of the distinction of meats, which is confessedly ' superseded ;' I reply,

(1.) That is *gratis dictum* : an assertion without proof. No fair reasoner will *assume his facts*, and put his opponent to the proof of a negative.

(2.) If the objector argue from the *connexion* in which the *reason* of the law stands, he has no right to stop at the distinction of meats, but must make it apply to the *whole preceding* ordinances ; the effect of which would be, to represent the most high God as punishing the nations of Canaan for the breach of laws which were never given to them ; were never intended for them ; and had no existence at all before the punishment was denounced. That be far from him to do, and far from us to impute to him.

(3.) The objection itself concedes, according to what we have just established, that *prior to the Levi-*

tical law, God had set up a barrier between the degrees of kindred, which marriage might not over-leap: and for the neglect of which he severely visited even idolatrous nations. Consequently, this law would have been in force had the Levitical law never been enacted. But that law embraced and confirmed the preceding law of marriage; and could, in no sense whatever, repeal it. As a peculiarity of the Mosaic dispensation it could not be repealed by the introduction of the evangelical economy; or, to speak more properly, could not expire by its own limitation: for it was not a peculiarity of the Mosaic dispensation. Expressly it is not repealed, or declared to have ceased, in the New Testament. But if it was confirmed by the Mosaic revelation; if it is not annulled by the *express* decision of the New Testament; nor superseded, as a Jewish peculiarity, by the *genius* of the Christian religion, it is not abolished, superseded, nor invalidated at all; but is binding upon us at this hour.

Should it still be urged, that "this reasoning will prove the perpetual and universal obligation to observe the distinction of meats, which was also before the Mosaic law, I reply again,

(1.) That the moral propriety of the prohibited degrees remains the same: their *principle* being common to all mankind, which cannot be maintained of the distinction of meats.

(2.) That in the 21st chapter of Leviticus, there is a repetition, in substance, of these same restrictions, with the same reason subjoined; and *immediately* after, the observance of the distinction of meats is commanded, not only *without* that reason, but for *another* reason. The reason for the first is, that by transgressing the laws of marriage, and by other *moral* impurities, the nations had made themselves abhorred of God. The reason for the distinction of meats is, that Jehovah had *separated* the

Israelites to himself. This shows that the distinction of meats was *originally* ceremonial, which cannot be pretended of the restrictions of marriage.

(3.) The distinction of meats is formally abolished in the New Testament. Of this, I think, there can be no doubt by any man who compares Peter's vision, in Acts 10. with the decision of the apostolical synod, Acts 15. See particularly verses 1. 5. 10. 24. 28, 29.; and with the judgment of inspired Paul, Rom. xiv. Gal ii. 11—14. Col. ii. 16, 17. Heb. viii. 13. ix. 10. But the law of marriage is not abolished: for,

3d. In discussing the case of the incestuous man at Corinth, Paul *assumes*, as a fact not to be disputed, the continuance of the old restrictions. Had they been abolished, it would have been no more "fornication," for one to marry his *father's* widow, than to marry any other unbetrothed woman. Had it been adultery, the crime would have been no more heinous, than his cohabiting with any other married woman. Yet Paul lays heavy stress upon this circumstance, that she had been his *father's* wife. A circumstance of no weight at all, unless the divine law concerning prohibited degrees was in force. *There* such a connexion is expressly forbidden. But you must take the *whole law together*. You may not pick out *one* or *two* of its provisions, at your pleasure or your convenience, and throw aside the rest. Unless you can show a dispensation from the law-giver, *every* part of the law is binding, for the same reason which renders *any* part of it binding; as the divine authority equally pervades *all* its parts.

In the course of his remarks, Paul observes, that having "a *father's* wife," is a species of uncleanness, which was not "so much as *named* among the Gentiles." I need not prove that this is a Scriptural form of speech expressing the utmost detestation, as in Ephes. v. 3. "Fornication, and

“all uncleanness, and covetousness, let it not be
“once *named* among you, as becometh saints.” It
is obvious, on the face of the argument, that Paul *ap-
proves* of this feeling among the Gentiles. Now,
how came the Gentiles by it? and why did the apos-
tle approve it? If it had not been right, he had not
honoured it with his apostolic sanction. Right it
could not be, unless conformable to the divine law.
The case was a case of *incest*: the Gentiles abhor-
red it; the apostle commends them; but there could
have been no place either for their abhorrence, or for
his commendation, unless the marriage in ques-
tion were contrary to the law of God. Not merely
the Mosaic law, surely! That law was now fulfilled,
and its peculiarities were gone. It never bound the
Gentiles: yet incest is abhorred by them. But what
creates incest? The divine law. We are thus
brought back to the same result from which the ob-
jection had carried us away. *That*, for the neglect
of which God punished the Heathen *before* the law
of Moses; *that*, which was confirmed by the Mo-
saic law; *that*, which obligated nations who knew not
the rites of Moses; *that*, which the apostle, under
plenary inspiration, damns with his reprobation after
their decease, belongs to a law which is, and must be,
of unalterable obligation. There is no escaping from
this conclusion, without maintaining that Paul decided
wrong; in other words, that the Holy Ghost com-
mitted a blunder.

Let me add a consideration, which may influence
the prudent, even when conscience, badly instructed,
rebels against moral demonstration. It is said by
Physiologists, that the intermarriage of near rela-
tions, never fails to produce *madness* in the course of
one or two generations. The fact they assert as in-
contestible. If it is so, as this was not the effect of
the *first* marriage, it must be viewed as a physical

penalty by which God has fortified his restrictive law of marriage.

Upon the whole, if the limitations set to the degrees of kindred in marriage contracts by the laws recorded in the books of Moses, are not universally and perpetually moral, it is difficult to know how we shall ascertain moral law in any case whatever.

(To be concluded in our next.)

A Dissertation, in which the evidence for the Authenticity and Divine Inspiration of the Apocalypse is stated, and vindicated from the Objections of the late Professor J. D. Michaelis; by JOHN CHAPPEL WOODHOUSE, M. A.

CHAP. VII.

The testimonies of Gregory of Neocæsarea; and of Dionysius of Alexandria; of his private opinion; the testimonies of other writers in the same century; of Eusebius, and the writers in his time, and after him; of the reception of the Apocalypse at the Reformation.

(Continued from page 33.)

WITH the last chapter I might have fairly closed all that need be said, to defend the authenticity of the Apocalypse, by *external* evidence. For what addition of historical testimony can we require? what original documents are we likely to procure? or what weight of contradictory external evidence can we expect to encounter, in the times beyond those we have examined? Who, in these after-ages, can give us information, which will bear comparison with that which we have already received? or whom of the succeeding Fathers can we esteem equal judges with Hippolitus and Origen, whether it be of the evidence already produced, or of the questions agitated in their times, concerning the authenticity of the Apocalypse*?

* Dr. Less, in his History of Religion, closes his evidence with Origen, and Mr. Marsh observes, that further testimony is unnecessary. See *Introd.* vol. i. p. 561.

Yet I shall pursue the subject, because it has been pursued further by Michaelis. It is, at least, curious, to know the sentiments of later writers on the external evidence; though the same accuracy in examining them may not be required.

GREGORY of Neocæsarea, surnamed Thaumaturgus, not mentioned by Michaelis, is supposed to have referred, in his Panegyrical Oration, to Rev. iii. 7. if not to Isa. xxii. 22. The observation is Lardner's*, who remarks also, that Gregory, having been the pupil of Origen, and much attached to that great man, probably received the same Canon of Scripture.

DIONYSIUS of Alexandria, was another pupil of Origen, and, like Gregory, a man of eminence. He received the Apocalypse as a divine prophecy, which he represents to be dark indeed, and ænigmatical, and above his comprehension, yet certainly divine; and he says he could not dare to think otherwise of it, since many of the brethren held it in the highest esteem†. He appeals to it, likewise, as containing a divine prophecy, which he believes to have been fulfilled during his own times, in the character and conduct of the persecuting Emperor Valerian‡. At the same time, it was the opinion of Dionysius, that the Apocalypse, though of divine origin, was not written by the Apostle John, but by some other John, an holy and inspired man. But where are the grounds of this opinion? Are they historical? Does he allege in their support any external evidence? any tradition of the Church? No. He gives his opinion as a *conjecture* formed upon the *internal* evidence of the book, on certain peculiarities of style and manner, which appeared to him discordant from those of St. John in his Gospel and Epistles.

These arguments of Dionysius will be consider-

* Cred. Gosp. Hist. art. Greg. of N. C.

† Euseb. H. E. lib. vii. c. 25.

‡ Euseb. H. E. Lib. vii. c. 10.

ed, when we examine the *internal* evidence, by which the authority of the book is supported or invalidated. It is our present business to report only the *external* evidence of Dionysius. And the amount of this is, that the Apocalypse was generally received, in his time, as a sacred prophecy, and by such men as he revered, and wished not to oppose; that some persons had rejected it, and ascribed it to Cerinthus; that he himself believed it to be a book of sacred authority, doubting, at the same time, whether it were properly referred to the Apostle John.

It is the opinion of Michaelis, (and Lardner has afforded some occasion for it,) that, although Dionysius professed in such strong terms his reception of the Apocalypse, as a divine book of Prophecy, yet he did not believe it such in his heart. Dionysius has certainly affirmed such to be his belief in plain and positive terms; and his practice was agreeable to his professions. For we have seen that he proceeded so far, as to explain a prediction of the Apocalypse as actually fulfilled. Now, if proofs were wanting of the sincerity and plain Christian honesty of Dionysius's character, this particular *fact*, that he appealed to the Apocalypse, as containing a prophecy which he believed to be fulfilled, would place beyond all doubt, that he believed that book to be inspired. But Dionysius was confessedly a man of an open, artless probity; and Lardner celebrates him as such, adding, in his account of him, that he had at the same time, (which is a usual accompaniment of such a character,) an honest and excessive warmth. But the conduct which Michaelis attributes to him on this occasion, is that of a sly, captious hypocrite. Certainly, neither the general character, nor conduct of Dionysius, nor the facts which have now appeared before us, can, in any degree, warrant such a conclusion*.

* Michaelis has defended his opinion, by arguments which appear to me

This Father of the Church appears to me to have thought, that he was doing no injury to the Apocalypse, by assigning it to another author, instead of St. John, to "some holy and heavenly inspired man." So far, at least, he might fairly think, that he was defending the book, by taking away the foundation of those objections to it, which arose from the dissimilarity of its style from that of St. John's. And perhaps he might reason, that as the Apocalypse is not evangelical history, it may not necessarily require the evidence of an eye-witness of our Lord's life; that as it is not a book revealing doctrines and rules of conduct, it may not be necessarily confined to the pen of an Apostle; but that some other holy martyr, some apostolical man, (for the time of its date implied so much,) might, like Daniel, or other Prophets of the Old Testament, be selected by the Spirit, to convey these visions to the Church. I do not

unequal to the defence of it. He says, that Dionysius has assigned reasons for his not venturing to reject the Apocalypse, which are wholly devoid of importance. They did not appear such to Dionysius, nor will they, I think, to the generality of Christian readers. 1. "He did not reject it, because many of the brethren held it in the highest esteem." Now, surely, this is a reason which must be allowed to have considerable weight on the mind of a modest and sensible man. The pupils of Irenæus, of Tertullian, of Hippolytus, and of Origen, were still living. They had been taught by their masters, and by the general tradition of the Church, to consider the Apocalypse as a book of divine authority: and they resisted the new-fashioned notions, derived from the Alogi or Caius, who ascribed it to Cerinthus, *δια σπυδης* zealously. Dionysius was modest, and had a due deference to the opinions of such men, and he censures obliquely those who, in his time as in ours, delighted to run counter to the received opinions of the Church.

2. The other reason, which Dionysius assigns for not rejecting the Apocalypse, and which our author deems also weak and unimportant, is in answer to those who rejected it, because it was difficult to be understood. But Dionysius answers, that, "He, for his part, does not reject what he does not understand: that, not being able to understand the Apocalypse, he supposes it to contain a sublimer sense than his faculties can reach; and to become, therefore, the object of his faith, rather than of his understanding; and that his wonder and admiration are in proportion to his ignorance." Now

give this as a sound and authorized conclusion, but as such an one as may perhaps have satisfied the mind of Dionysius, who certainly found a great stumbling-block in the style and manner of the Apocalypse, and yet appears, by his profession, and by his practice, to have received it as an inspired book.

I have extended my observations, I fear, to an unwarranted length, in this attempt to reconcile the opinions of Dionysius. But I was moved to it by a desire to do justice to a character which stands deservedly high in Ecclesiastical History; to exculpate an eminent Christian Father, from the charge of setting an example, under which the late Mr. Gibbon might have sheltered his artful, disingenuous, and insulting attack upon the Christian religion. I shall return to my subject; first remarking on the external evidence collected from Dionysius, that whatever notion may obtain concerning his private opinions, it is at least clear, from his testimony, that

this argument, which may be accounted weak, and, (from such a man as Dionysius,) insulting, supposing him not to believe the divine inspiration of the book, will be found to carry with it a considerable force and efficacy, if we suppose him to believe it. Try it, by an application of it to other difficult parts of Scripture; to the unfulfilled Prophecies of Isaiah, Ezekiel, or Daniel. Shall we reject these, and deny their divine inspiration, because we do not understand them? Far otherwise. They have been delivered to us by our Christian ancestors, as of sacred authority; they are strongly supported by external evidence. We must wait the time of their completion with pious awe and patience. We may not be able to understand them; we may wonder, but we cannot reject. Would the Jews, who lived before our Saviour's time, have been justified in rejecting the dark and ænigmatical, and, to appearance, contradictory prophecies, which represented him as a triumphal king and conqueror, despised of men, &c. merely because they did not understand them? This argument of Dionysius is not, therefore, "wholly devoid of importance." It was that which influenced all the Fathers of the Church; who, although they understood not the Apocalypse, received it on its external evidence, with pious veneration, and delivered it to succeeding times. And it is our duty to follow their example, modestly and diligently to interpret what we can, and to deliver the remainder to be fulfilled and interpreted in future ages.

the Apocalypse was generally received in his time, and in high estimation with those Christians whom Dionysius himself revered.

“After the age of Dionysius,” says our author*, “the number of ecclesiastical writers, who quote the Apocalypse as a divine work, especially of the members of the Latin Church, begins to increase. But as they are of less importance than the more ancient writers, and I have little or nothing to remark on their quotations, I shall content myself with barely mentioning their names, and referring to Lardner, by whom their quotations are collected†.”

Little more, indeed, can be done; to the weight of evidence already produced, not much can now be added; nor can it be deemed to diminish from it, if some writers of account in later times, influenced perhaps by the arguments advanced by Dionysius and by others, concerning the *internal*, have been backward to admit the *external* evidence for the Apocalypse.

This book was received, as of sacred authority, in the times of Dionysius, by Cyprian, and by the African Churches; by the Presbyters and others of the Church of Rome, who corresponded with Cyprian; by divers Latin authors whose history is abstracted by Lardner; by the anonymous author of a work against the Novatians; by the Novatians themselves; by Commodian; by Victorinus, who wrote a commentary upon it; by the author of the poem against the Marcionites; by Methodius, who also commented upon it; by the Manichæans; by the later Arnobius; by the Donatists; and by Lactantius.

All these evidences in favour of the Apocalypse are admitted by Michaelis, who expresses no doubt

* P. 484.

† See Lardner's Cred. Gosp. Hist. part ii. vol. ii. p. 777, &c.

concerning any of them, excepting the Manichæans, whose evidence, in another passage, he seems to allow*.

We now come to the testimony of EUSEBIUS, which may deserve a more particular attention. To this valuable collector of Ecclesiastical History, (which would otherwise have perished,) we are indebted for many important testimonies of ancient authors in favour of the Apocalypse, which have already been produced. And by him we have been informed of all the objections which were made to it, by Caius and Dionysius, which seem to have had a considerable influence upon the learned Christians of Eusebius's age, and to have occasioned some doubt among them, whether they should receive the Apocalypse into their catalogue of undoubted books of Holy Writ, or place it among those of less authority. Eusebius represents the matter as in debate, and not yet determined, at the time he wrote his Ecclesiastical History. He promises further information, when the matter shall be settled by the testimony of the ancients; but it does not appear that he ever gave it.

We may be enabled to form some notion of the nature of this debate concerning the Apocalypse, by attending to what Eusebius has delivered upon the subject. He has distributed into four classes all the books pretending to a place in the sacred canon of the New Testament†.

1. The Ομολογούμενοι, Αναμφιλέκτοι, books universally read, and admitted to be genuine.

2. Αντιλεγόμενοι, Ὅμως Γνωρίμοι Τοῖς Πολλοῖς, books objected to by some, yet acknowledged by *the* many, by the greater part of the Church.

3. Νοθοι, spurious, or apocryphal books, whose authenticity, or whose divine inspiration, was denied by

* P. 521.

† H. E. lib. iii. c. 25.

the Church, but which might be usefully read, as containing pious thoughts, and no bad doctrine.

4. Books published by heretics, which no Father of the Church has deigned to support with his external evidence, and which have no support of internal evidence, being discordant from the apostolical writings, both as to matter and manner.

Eusebius places the Apocalypse in the first, and also in the third class; but as it cannot belong to both, so, in placing it in each of these classes, he adds, *εἰ φάινεται*, "if it should so seem proper." It was to stand in one of these classes, when the question concerning its pretensions should be determined. Hence may be inferred, that the question was then so far settled in the mind of Eusebius, that it *must* belong either to the first or third class, and by no means to the second or fourth. It was not then esteemed, with the books of the fourth class, a forgery of the heretics; it was not the work of Cerinthus. From this silly notion of it, first started by the Alogi, it was now fairly delivered. The quotations of the early Fathers, as well as internal evidence arising from the book, which is contradictory to the tenets of Cerinthus, and affords support to no heresy, had saved it from this class.

Nor was it to be placed in the second class; with the Epistles of James, Jude, &c. books which a considerable part of the Christian world had not received, though they were generally acknowledged to be of divine authority. This determination, excluding the Apocalypse from the second class, seems to import, that the Apocalypse, until the times of Eusebius, was almost universally received by the Church. The doubts concerning it had arisen only in the minds of a few learned critics, who, from an examination of the style and other internal marks, were induced to contend that it was not the work of Saint John. If it should be determined to be John's

work, it was then to be referred to the same class with his Gospel and first Epistle. If it were found not to be written by that Apostle, it was yet allowed to be the work of some other pious apostolical John, and then, as it could not be placed in the first class, with the writings of the Apostles, it was to be consigned to the same class with the writings of apostolical men; with the Epistle of Barnabas, with Hermas, and other books which the ancient Church considered as written by persons whose names they bear, and which were read by Christians, as we read the apocryphal books of the Old Testament, for the pious matter contained in them, but not considered as of divine authority.

It appears, then, that in the times of Eusebius, the Apocalypse had its place among the genuine, undoubted books of sacred Scripture. There he first places it; but as some learned or ingenious critics had produced arguments, which, if allowed by the Church, would degrade it from this exalted situation, he prepares for it likewise another place, in which it would stand, if these arguments should prevail. The place prepared for it shows that the attempt of its adversaries did not go so far as to denominate it a forgery, or an impious book, but the work of a pious and eminent Christian, if not of an Apostle*. Yet all the inquiries, set on foot by these doubters, seem not to have brought the matter to a conclusion. They who made objections to the style and manner of the Apocalypse, appear not to have succeeded in their attempt to degrade it, by the production of any external and historical proofs. Eusebius produces only a *conjecture*, "*perhaps* John the Presbyter was its author:" but what weight could be allowed to such a *conjecture*, unsupported by any historical evi-

* The attempt, in modern times, is to mark it as a forgery, "a spurious production, introduced probably into the world after the death of St. John," p. 487.: but how totally unsupported by *external evidence*!

dence, and not given to the world till above two hundred years after the Apocalypse was written? Eusebius, indeed, seems to lay little stress upon it, for he adds, immediately afterwards, "If it be not insisted upon to be the former John," that is, John the Apostle.

Upon the whole, we are not to be surprised that, in Eusebius' time, the claims of the Apocalypse to its situation in the sacred canon, should meet with some opposition. Two hundred years had now elapsed since it had been published to the world; many of the authentic documents which supported its authenticity, had probably perished in the Dioclesian persecution*; the prophecies which it contained were still dark, and apparently unfulfilled†; they had been abused by the Millenarians; the style and manner had been pointed out to be unlike that of St. John; the criticisms of Dionysius had influence with many; yet no one, however desirous, from these and other concurring causes, of invalidating the authority of the book, appears to have been able to produce any *external evidence*, which might suit the purpose.

It was received, after the times of Eusebius, by the Latin Churches, almost without exception. Jerome, the most learned and diligent inquirer of that century, pronounced positively in its favour; and was followed universally by the Fathers of the Western Churches: and from him we learn the grounds upon which he received the Apocalypse, which he assigns to be "the authority of the ancients‡," that is, *external evidence*; and he tells us at the same time, that he does not follow "the fashion of his

* See the devastation made at that time in the records of the Church, as described by Eusebius, H. E. lib. viii. cap. 2.

† Epiphanius mentions the Alogi, as rejecting the Apocalypse; among other reasons *δια τα εν τη αποκαλυψει θαυματα και σκοτεινως εζημεντα* (Hier. 51) and he seems, in some measure, to admit the reasonableness of their excuse.

‡ Nequaquam hujus temporis consuetudinem, sed veterum auctoritatem sequentes. Hierom. Epist. ad Dardan. tom. ii.

"times," that fashion by which some of the Greek Churches were induced to reject the Apocalypse.

This fashion of the times seems to have consisted in a daring contempt of the testimonies of the ancient Church, and a ready acquiescence in those arguments which were confidently drawn from internal evidence. Yet, notwithstanding this fashion, which appears to have had considerable prevalence in the Greek Church, and perhaps to have influenced those eminent men, Cyril of Jerusalem, and John Chrysostom, (neither of whom appears to have quoted the Apocalypse,) many of great name in the Greek Church appear still to have received it; and, in the fourth century, it is supported by testimonies in this Church from Athanasius, Basil, Epiphanius, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzum*.

* Michaelis says, "Gregory of Nyssa places the Apocalypse among the apocryphal writings;" but he omits to tell us, that, *in the very same passage*, this Father quotes Rev. iii. 15. as the work "of John the Evangelist." ΗΧΕΣΤΑ ΤΗ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΤΗ ΙΩΑΝΝΗ ΕΝ ΑΠΟΚΡΥΦΟΙΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΤΟΙΣΤΗΣ ΔΙ' ΑΙΝΙΓΜΑΤΟΣ ΛΕΓΟΝΤΟΣ*. If the Apocalypse were apocryphal in the opinion of Gregory, he could not attribute it to John the Evangelist; but he calls it apocryphal, because it was now accounted such by many of the Greek Church. There are books of the Old Testament which are called apocryphal by our Church; yet some of these have been deemed divinely inspired by our own writers. If such a writer should quote from such a book, for instance, from the Second Book of Esdras, and introduce his quotation after the manner of Gregory; "I have heard the prophet Ezra, in the Apocrypha, say," we should conclude that he esteemed the Second of Esdras as the work of Ezra the Scribe, and an inspired writer in the Old Testament, the work of a divine Prophet. Somewhat of this kind has, I believe, happened in our own times.

The testimony of Gregory of Nazianzum has been accounted doubtful, and is considered as such by our author. The evidence which places this Father against the claims of the Apocalypse, is this: that it is not to be seen in his catalogue of canonical books. But, on the contrary, we collect from the representation of Andreas Cæsariensis, and of Arethas, in their respective commentaries on the Apocalypse, that Gregory received it; and Lardner has produced two passages from his works, in which it is clearly quoted as of Di-

* *In suam Ordinatio. t. ii. p. 144.*

Of the Syrian Churches we have no satisfactory information, how early or to what extent they received the Apocalypse. In the fourth century, it appears by the testimony of Ephrem that it was received by them, and probably much sooner, since the translated works of Hippolitus, that renowned champion for the book, were much read, and in high request among those Christians who used the Syriac language.

 κηρυξ̃ μεγας Ουρανοφοιτης,

* It has commonly been urged, as a testimony against the Apocalypse, that it was rejected by the Council of Laodicea, in 363. But Michaelis professes himself satisfied, that the Catalogue of Sacred Writings annexed to the canons of that Council, has been clearly shown to be a forgery, p. 489.

† See them in Lardner's *Cred. Gosp. Hist.* art. *Greg. Nazianz.*—Ὁ υἱ, ὁ νῦν, ὁ ἐρχομενός, καὶ ὁ παντοκράτωρ. These words of Rev. i. 8. are quoted by *Greg. Naz.* as spoken of the Son. *Orat.* xxxv, edit. Morelli, p. 573.

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It is useless to pursue the history of the Apocalypse, through the dark ages of the Church. No external evidence is to be expected from such times. At length the light of the Reformation followed the reproduction of learning, and a free and critical inquiry was instituted into the testimony of the ancients, as well as into the internal evidence of the book. And what was the result? The Apocalypse is generally, and, I believe, almost universally received as canonical Scripture. Luther, and some of the first Reformers, had their doubts concerning it: but these soon subsided, being over-ruled by the more profound and accurate examination of other learned men. And although the Articles of the Lutheran Church are represented by Michaelis to leave the question open; yet he tells us at the same time, "that the greater part of the Lutheran Divines refer the Apocalypse, without doubt or scruple, to the class of canonical writings of the New Testament*."

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND was blessed with the important privilege of settling her articles and her canon of Scripture at a later period; at a time when the testimonies of the ancients concerning the books of Scripture, were more accurately ascertained; when the first crude notions of the Reformers had been matured into safe opinions, by the progress of time and of truth†. But the Church of England had no hesitation to place the book of Apocalypse in her sacred canon; and, I doubt not, her sons will continue to supply her with irrefragable reasons for retaining it.

* P. 501.

† This is a remarkable instance of good coming out of evil. The advantage arose from the subjugated state in which this Church was holden, at the beginning of the Reformation, by the tyrannical hand of Henry the Eighth. This retarded the settlement of our ecclesiastical opinions, till they were more maturely considered, during thirty years of inquisitive research into every subject of this nature.

And here I close what I have been able to collect of the *external evidence* for the Apocalypse.

We have seen its rise, as of a pure fountain, from the sacred rock of the apostolical Church. We have traced it through the first century of its passage, flowing from one fair field to another, identified through them all, and every where the same. As it proceeded lower, we have seen attempts to obscure its sacred origin, to arrest or divert its course, to lose it in the sands of antiquity, or bury it in the rubbish of the dark ages. We have seen these attempts repeated in our own times, and by a dextrous adversary*. But it has at length arrived to us, such as it flowed forth at the beginning.

In short, so far as the question concerning the Apocalypse is to be determined by *external evidence*, we may indubitably pronounce that *the book is to be received as Divine Scripture, communicated to the Church by John the Apostle and Evangelist.*

* Και ρ' ἔθελε ῥῆξαι σιχας ανδρων, πηρητιζων,
Η δὴ πλεστον ομιλον ορα και τευχε' αριστα.
Αλλ' εδ' ὡς δυνατο ρηξαι, μαλα περ μενεαινων.

Iliad, Q. 615.

(*To be continued.*)

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.

Extract of a letter from Moscow, Dec. 11, N. S. 1809.

"The Clergy in this place belonging to the Greek Church, are very numerous ; many of them are well behaved, and really learned men ; yet, they are by no means so liberal-minded towards other classes of Christians as might be expected from men of cultivated understandings. On the contrary, they are jealous to the utmost degree of every innovation in their religion, or any thing tending thereto, and make it their study to keep the people bound up in ignorance and superstition.

"The Nobility of Russia live in the midst of luxury and ungodliness : and the most of them, in regard to religion, are free-thinkers. The high degree to which infidelity has arisen among them, is indeed lamentable. The repute in which the language and manners of the French are held, together with the multitude of ungodly publications in that language, which are so much beloved by the nobility, have tended not a little to bring about this corruption in morals and disregard of religion. The education of their offspring too is in general wholly committed to French Governors and Governesses, most part of whom are the enemies of Christianity, and instead of impressing the minds of their pupils with a sense of the Divine Presence, or convincing them of their need of a Saviour, they teach them to make game of religion and its professors, yea, to contemn God, neglect their own souls, and seek happiness alone in the things of this world.

"The mercantile class of people in this city is large. They hold closely to the Greek Church, and follow the customs of their fathers, that is, in regard to religion, clothing, and manner of living. In general, they know how to read and write their own language, and are, in their own estimate, religious : but, of all the men I ever met with, they are most given to fraud in their dealings. Russians in general, however, are very prone to cheat and deceive.

"The lower classes of the people are mostly all in a state of slavery. They are ignorant, and superstitious ; and the priests and their masters study to hold them in their present lamentable condition. Infidelity among the rich, unjust dealing among the merchants, and drunkenness among the lower classes, are the sins that most abound among the Russians."

(Report of the Religious Tract Society.)

Report of the Directors to the London Missionary Society, at their sixteenth general meeting, on Thursday, May 10, 1810.

(Continued from page 44.)

MADRAS.

OUR dear brother Loveless has, during the past year, been so much

afflicted by sickness, that his public labours were for a considerable time interrupted. During this interval, our respected friend, Mr. Vos, had supplied his place with much acceptance; and, at the date of Mr. Loveless' last letters, in October, he was perfectly restored, and had resumed all his engagements. While attentive to the duties of the important stations he occupies, as a preacher, and as master of the asylum, he laments that the commencement of the *Surat Mission*, for which he was originally destined, should have been so long delayed, through the circumstances which were fully detailed in our last Report; and he still recommends and encourages its being commenced by suitable Missionaries.

He was much cheered at the prospect of soon seeing the Brethren from the Cape of Good Hope, and assures us that on their arrival at Madras they would all be cordially received; and that there was no obstruction to the two Brethren proceeding to the Birman Empire. These intimations are highly gratifying, after the unworthy attempts that have been made, here and in India, to prejudice the Public against the Missionary cause.

His ministry in the chapel appeared to go on comfortably; and much liberality in the support of it began to be manifested among the hearers. One of them had presented him with 100 star-pagodas, (40*l.*) for the necessary expenses, so that he had been enabled to replace to the Society's funds, what had been advanced therefrom for the chapel the last year.

The male school he had undertaken was in a prosperous state, and so well supported, that a proposition had been made to commence a *female school* on the same plan: the subscription was begun, and application has been made to Government, to render these establishments permanent. He says, that if the descendants of Europeans, by whose zeal these infant seminaries were principally raised, had "a Missionary minister entirely devoted to their spiritual instruction, many would probably prove ornaments to the church of Christ."

The death of the Rev. Dr. Kerr, of Madras, a truly Christian minister, and zealous friend of Missions, was announced in our last Report, and was justly considered as peculiarly afflictive; but it evidently appears that God had provided other faithful servants like-minded, who act on the same kind and liberal principles in the support of His cause, and in forwarding every plan for the diffusion of the light of divine truth among the Heathen.

Our aged Brother Vos, not finding himself comfortable at Vizagapatam, had, as he formerly proposed, returned to pass the remainder of his days and ministry among his countrymen at the Cape of Good Hope.

VIZAGAPATAM.

OUR Brother Des Granges, though deeply afflicted by the removal of his dear coadjutor, continued, with exemplary diligence, his labours of love, in teaching, preaching, and translating the Scriptures and small tracts into Telinga, assisted by Anandarayer, formerly a Bramin, who, with his pious wife, exhibited unequivocal proofs of the power of that glorious gospel, by which they had been brought out of Darkness into marvellous light. (See Appendix, No. III.)

Suitable steps had been taken to facilitate the journey of the Brethren Gordon and Lee, from Bengal to Vizagapatam, which we trust has been accomplished; and that this important Mission, reinforced by these long-expected Brethren, is now proceeding successfully, under the fostering care of the great Head of the church.

Our last letters from Mr. Des Granges are dated in August and September, 1809. He continues to exhibit the power and influence of the love of Christ on his heart, and appears to be animated by a true Missionary spirit.

Just as he was concluding these communications, he had learnt, to his great joy, of the arrival of his friends Gordon and Lee, with their families, in Bengal. Extracts from his correspondence will convey an idea of his situation and exertions. (See Appendix, No. IV.)

IN CEYLON.

THE Missionary Brethren, Palm, Errhardt, and Read, continue their laudable exertions in different places; but we are much concerned to state, that the Missionary cause does not prosper in the island. Pure and evangelical religion is hated and opposed by the nominal Christians. Many of the Malays and Cingalese, who had been baptized by the Dutch ministers when the island was in their possession, have relapsed into gross idolatry; and the blind attachment of the natives in general to their abominable idols, together with the difficulty of acquiring the Cingalese language, and the very *limited number* of Missionaries, all combine to hinder the progress of the gospel in this populous domain of the British Empire.

It is, however, some alleviation of our regret, that the desolate situation of the inhabitants, in a moral and religious point of view, seems to be generally felt; in consequence of which the presiding judge of that island has taken measures, we are informed, to obtain from home Christian teachers, for the instruction both of Europeans and of the natives. Some good men of high rank in military stations, with whom the Directors have had communication, are also strongly impressed with the feelings of compassion towards this destitute people, and are anxious to obtain suitable help. These good intentions it will be the duty and pleasure of the Directors to promote as far as may be in their power.

By a diary received from Mr. Errhardt, at Matura, which contains his proceedings from March, 1808, to the close of that year, it appears, that on the 4th of May, only about eight months after the period of his painful separation from Mr. Vos, his sphere of usefulness was again enlarged; and he was unexpectedly authorized, by a warrant from the governor, to perform all the duties of the ministerial office, in Matura, and its district. At Point de Galle also, which is near Matura, and where Mr. Vos was formerly stationed, until called from thence to Columbo, by Governor North, he was likewise encouraged to discharge the same duties. He appears to have entered on these labours in a spiritual frame of mind, and in the exercise of that Christian prudence which his circumstances required. The extracts from his diary in the Appendix, (see No. V.) will sufficiently express his situation, views, and avocations.

By a letter from Mr. W. Read, dated at Point de Galle, Feb. 14, 1809, we find that he preached to the English soldiers, and visited them when

confined to the hospital; and for the last two years had also exhorted in Dutch, on Lord's-day evenings, in the house of a friend. He meets the most serious of the people at the house of one of the Dutch elders once a-week. He continued to study the Cingalese language, in which he could read, write, and speak a little; and hoped by degrees to attain such maturity as to expound the Scriptures in that language. He kept a school for teaching Cingalese and Portuguese boys the English language, on which he engrafted religious instruction; and had got two approved catechisms translated into Dutch, Portuguese, and Cingalese, which he hopes to get printed at Columbo. He asks for a supply of Bibles, hymn-books, prayer-books, &c. for his school, all which will be sent him: and says he has no doubt but much good may be done by good Missionaries who could speak the Cingalese language, notwithstanding the deplorable darkness of that people, which, like Brother Errhardt, he describes and laments in the most affecting terms.

From Mr. Palm, who was situated at Tillipally, near Jaffnapatnam, we have received no later accounts than those published in the XXth Number of Transactions, dated Feb. 28, 1808. It is probable that his letters and journal are on their way; and also communications from Mr. Ringeltaube, (who was at Palamotta, in the Tinevelly district;) but none have yet reached us: it would appear, however, by the agent's account, that the latter is employing catechists to assist him in his labours.

CHINA.

EVERY account from our Missionary, Mr. Morrison, renews and heightens our satisfaction. By his indefatigable attention to the language, with the aid of able teachers, the principal difficulties are surmounted; and it appears that the period of his acquiring it completely, is by no means so distant as might have been expected.

His journals, to the close of the year 1808, have been received, and letters to April 17, 1809: from the former, some extracts appear in our XXIst Number of Transactions. Further interesting matter will be given in our future Numbers.

It has proved of great advantage to him, that he copied and carried out with him the Chinese translation of the gospels, &c. preserved in the British Museum; which he now finds, from his own increasing acquaintance with the language, and the opinion of his Chinese assistants, to be exceedingly valuable, and which must, from the excellency of the style, have been produced by Chinese natives.

Mr. Morrison has also obtained other unexpected helps in reference to the Scriptures; particularly an *Exposition of the Decalogue, in three volumes, in Chinese*, which a native, professing the Roman Catholic religion, furnished him with. It is but justice to notice the constant and grateful attention paid to Mr. Morrison by Yong Sam Tak, the Chinese native who assisted him when in London; and whose friendly services on many occasions, where a native only could serve him, have evinced his good disposition, and the favourable impression made upon his mind by Mr. Morrison's uprightness and benevolence.

The recent political disputes between the Chinese and our countrymen had occasionally interrupted his studies, and constrained him, with all the Europeans and Americans, repeatedly to remove from Canton to Macao, where he continued at the date of the last letters.

His talents, and assiduity in acquiring the language, have already

opened to him a prospect of such support, as will, in future, lessen the great but unavoidable expenses of this important Mission, and probably secure to him a permanent residence. He had providentially met with a respectable and pious English family at Macao, (Mr. Morton's,) who brought letters from Mr. Loveless; and shortly afterwards, he entered into the conjugal relation with Miss M. whose brother, an interesting youth, received his first serious impressions from the conversation of our Missionary, Read, at Ceylon. He had afterwards been greatly assisted, when at Madras, by Mr. Loveless, and by reading the works of *Alleine* and *Doddridge*. He immediately attached himself to Mr. Morrison, and was very desirous to devote himself wholly to the Lord, and the study of the Chinese language, with a view to Missionary labours. We cherish a hope that this youth will prove a great help to him; and at Mr. Morrison's recommendation, we have empowered him to receive Mr. Morton into the service of the Society, if his perseverance, piety, and suitableness, should be manifested as he advances in years and experience.

The following extracts will afford an interesting view of the state and progress of the great work in which our beloved Brother is engaged; and of the unabating piety which supports and animates his mind, under a privation of the outward means and ordinances enjoyed in Christian society.

1808—"At the close of this year, I bless the Lord for his great goodness manifested towards me in ten thousand instances. I bless him for a large portion of health, for the light of his countenance, and for success in my studies. I have not to rejoice over any brought from the error of their ways, and from their dumb Idols, to serve the living and the true God; yet I have to bless the Lord that he has granted me considerable success in the attainment of the language. I trust that the period of acquiring it thoroughly is by no means so distant as I once supposed it would be. In the grammar, dictionary, and Scriptures, and essays on the Christian religion, which are proposed, I see an extensive field of labour that may be cultivated with advantage on the confines of this empire; and whilst that is effecting, the Lord may prepare the hearts of civil governors to open to us a great and effectual door.

"Should you not have written to me as to what extent you will accredit me in publishing the grammar and dictionary, or any part of the Scriptures, I hope you will be very particular in your next communications on that head; and in contemplating the extent of their circulation, include the nations of Japan and Cochin-china. I hope considerable benefit will accrue to your future Missionaries from the grammar and dictionary, and from the collection of Chinese books which I have made at your expense.

"The grammar is prepared for the press, and the dictionary is daily filling up. The MS. of the New Testament is in part fit to be printed. All these, however, are deferred till I shall be more deeply versed in the language, that what shall be done may not be hasty and imperfect.

"The whole expense for the first year, including food, house-rent, books, tuition, domestics, and the expenses of removing to and from Canton, was upwards of 500*l*. The danger of incurring still greater expense, prevents any steps being taken at present towards printing. Indeed nothing can be done till I be instructed to what expense I may go.

"I have said above, that at present I have no prospect of entering the

empire; and indeed, unless it were with great freedom, it is not desirable. The works I propose, and my personal assistance to your future Missionaries in the acquisition of the language, will be much better accomplished where I now am, or at Penang, than in China; and are, moreover, likely to be, by the blessing of God, productive of much greater good than even a residence at Pekin. An aversion to all foreigners is a leading feature in the disposition of this people.

"But we raise our eyes to Jehovah our Saviour; we shall not be discouraged, but go forward. Nothing is too hard for God. Hath he spoken, and will he not do it? O no; all the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn to the Lord, and the kindreds of the nations bow before him! Farewell!

Yours in the hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ
our Lord,

ROBERT MORRISON."

NORTH AMERICA.

MR. PIDGEON appears to have been industrious in his evangelical labours at New Carlisle, and at Restigouche near the Bay of Chaleur, where his ministry has been well received, and seems to have been useful. He thought it, however, expedient to spend the last winter in Prince Edward's Island, where he arrived with his family in September. "Here," he says, "I am diligently employed in preaching the glorious gospel of the blessed God, and here I find an ample field for making known the savour of that name which is above every name. I expect to abide here during the winter, and should prefer remaining here altogether, should it meet the approbation of the Directors." It is probable that he will return to his former station for the summer. He describes both places as greatly needing many more labourers, the people being very destitute of instruction, yet earnestly desirous of obtaining it.

Mr. Pidgeon informs us that Mr. Mitchell, formerly our Missionary, is settled at Amherst, where he is diligent in preaching the word of life; and, he believes, also along the coasts of New-Brunswick and Nova-Scotia.

A supply of Bibles, Testaments, and other books, which were sent to Mr. Pidgeon, have been gladly received; but many more are wanted in that destitute part of the world, and the Directors have lately ordered a new supply.

DEMARARA, TOBAGO, AND TRINIDAD.

THE information received in the course of the year from the different stations in the western world, continues to be encouraging. The Society has, indeed, to lament the removal by death of one of their warmest and most useful friends, Mr. Post, a gentleman of Le Rousevenir, in the colony of Demarara. Through his good offices, our first Missionary, Mr. Wray, was gladly received, and for a long time boarded in his house. Every possible facility was given to the instruction of his slaves, and those of the adjacent plantations; and a commodious chapel built, chiefly at his expense, for their accommodation. It is impossible to express the obligations under which the cause of religion in the colony was laid, by his influence, contributions, and exertions. But, in the midst of his usefulness, and when his example was likely to prove of the greatest advantage, it pleased the Sovereign Disposer of life to take to

himself that excellent man: he rests from his labours, his works will follow him, and the Society will long cherish the memory of their generous benefactor, while they indulge a hope that the recollection of his pious zeal will stir up others, both at home and abroad, to emulate so worthy an example.

Mr. Post, desirous that the people might continue to enjoy the benefit of evangelical instruction after his decease, has generously secured to this Society the chapel which he erected, together with a dwelling-house for the minister, (not then finished,) a garden, and the sum of 100*l.* annually towards the minister's support, so long as the Society shall continue to provide a Missionary who preaches the doctrines of the reformed church; but in case of their ceasing to do this, the provision made is to be transferred to a society in Scotland.

The last letters received from Mr. Wray, state that the cause of Christ continues to prosper, and that many persons, both old and young, are anxious to hear the word of life. His journals, (extracts from which appear in No. XXI of the *Missionary Transactions*,) contain many pleasing instances of the power of divine grace on the hearts of the negroes, both male and female; the alteration also produced on their moral conduct is such as recommends the gospel of Christ. Mr. Wray, referring to the Christmas holidays, says, "What a great and glorious change has taken place among them since the last year! Instead of following their vain amusements, numbers have turned to the Lord, sing his praises, and glorify his name. They now hate the things which they once loved, and delight in the things of Jesus, of which many of them never heard till lately. O thou blessed gospel, what hast thou done! Thy glories have won the hearts of many. Thy simple truths have subdued the most stubborn sinner, enlightened the darkest mind, changed the lion into the lamb, the swearer into a man of prayer, the child of wrath into an heir of heaven, and the sons and daughters of Satan into the children of God." Mrs. Wray also is diligent in the instruction of the female slaves and their children. From 16 to 20 children attend almost every day to learn to read; and generally in the evening a great many women. On the Lord's day, 50 children frequently attend. It is hoped that the preaching of the gospel will hereafter be more widely diffused in the colony, as some of the owners of estates seem disposed to permit the instruction of their slaves, having observed the good effect produced on those who have already been taught.

Mr. Adam, who accompanied Mr. Purkis to Demarara, not finding immediate employment as a Missionary there, and anxious to enter upon his work, left the colony in the month of August, 1809, and proceeded to the island of Trinidad, having a recommendation to some gentleman there. He has received a considerable degree of encouragement to preach the gospel to the white inhabitants and people of colour. By permission of the governor, he obtained leave to preach in the Freemason's Hall, in the town of Port of Spain, where three or four hundred persons have attended his ministry. Several persons, desirous of regular preaching, have subscribed about 500*l.* towards the erection of a chapel. The Directors do not consider this object, however desirable in itself, as that to which their Missionary should direct his principal attention, or to which the Society should contribute any considerable sum: they have grounds for believing, however, that by obtaining the countenance and support of persons of influence in the island, access will

be the more readily procured to the negro slaves, who are very numerous, and for whose spiritual instruction they have strongly recommended Mr. Adam by all means to use his utmost endeavours, considering all other objects as of inferior importance.

In Tobago, Mr. Elliot continues to preach to the slaves, permission being kindly granted by the owners of several estates, on some of which he collects about 40, on others 80 or 100 hearers. He does not speak in very sanguine terms of his success in the conversion of the negroes; yet there is reason to hope that his labours are not in vain. On one occasion, he says, "It was delightful to see with what eagerness these poor creatures heard the word of God; and more so to find that some of them understand what they hear, and practise what they know." At another place, where he preached to about 90 slaves, he says, "All seemed to receive instruction with thankfulness. The manager thinks that much good has been done among them, as far as it respects their morals, and speaks very highly of them indeed: this is the more encouraging, as they were formerly deemed a very bad gang." The Directors are peculiarly gratified by this remark; for they trust, that when the gentlemen of the West India Islands perceive that the slaves become more moral in their conduct, more docile in their temper, and more industrious in their business, in consequence of the evangelical instruction which they receive, they will afford every facility in their power to the efforts of Christian Missionaries, and also contribute to their support.

Mr. Elliot likewise preaches statedly once on the Lord's day, to the white and coloured inhabitants of the town of Scarborough, who assist in his maintenance, and thereby lessen the expenditure of the Society in behalf of this Mission. Concerning his hearers, he says, "There are two or three white persons, who appear to be concerned for their souls; and I rejoice to say that, instead of meeting with persecution, Mrs. Elliot and myself are treated with the greatest respect by the first persons, as well as by the poor, in the island. It has even been proposed to the council and assembly of Tobago, that a salary should be allowed me by the colony; and although my friends have failed in their kind efforts for this purpose, yet perhaps their wishes may eventually be accomplished."

MISSION TO THE JEWS.

THE Directors stated, in their last Report, that not conceiving themselves to be discharged from their duty by the withdrawment of their principal agent, they designed to persevere in their efforts with increased assiduity. They have therefore continued the lectures to the Jewish people who were disposed to attend at the chapel in Artillery-street. Their attention, however, to the lectures on the Lord's-day was so discouraging, that the Directors have lately been induced wholly to decline them. They have, however, resorted to another method, the effect of which has been more pleasing. They requested the assistance of many of the ministers of the gospel resident in and near London, by whom a course of lectures on appropriate subjects was carefully arranged, and which have been preached every Tuesday evening, from November last to the present month. These lectures, they are happy to say, have been very numerous attended, and apparently with much interest and improvement. The congregations have certainly consisted chiefly of professed Christians: but they have the satisfaction of knowing that some Jews also attended; with what effect, they are not able to determine; but by several

letters received from individuals of that nation, they perceive that a spirit of inquiry has in some degree been excited.

From past experience, and the most deliberate consideration of the subject, the Directors are still of opinion that the best, if not the only, means of promoting the conversion of this people, is by the preaching of the gospel, and the circulation of religious tracts.

The Directors have printed, and dispersed among the Jews, many thousand tracts, which they conceive were well adapted to engage their attention, additions to which will probably be made from some of the lectures which have been preached. The concluding part of Mr. Ewing's Essays for Jews is just received, and will be printed without delay.

SEMINARY.

THERE are now at the Missionary Seminary at Gosport seven young men, who are pursuing appropriate studies, with a view to the great work to which they are devoted, and who, it is hoped, will prove useful Missionaries of Jesus Christ. Those who left the Seminary about a year since, have, we trust, reached the several places of their destination; and the Directors feel much satisfaction in the prospect of their proving valuable labourers in the work of the Lord.

WE have now presented to you, Christian brethren, with as much brevity as we could, the state of the several Missions in which we are engaged; and we have reported the various degrees of success with which it has pleased the Sovereign Ruler of the church to favour them. The whole, we trust, will afford occasion of thanksgiving to Him, who it is our highest ambition to serve and please; and who, we hope, will accept our feeble but sincere endeavours to promote his glory, and to extend his kingdom in the world.

We are bound to acknowledge, with gratitude, the liberality of those of our Brethren in the country, who, on receiving the intimation of the great excess of our expenditure last year beyond our annual income, immediately procured, in their congregations, contributions towards our funds, by which they have been materially benefited. Nor ought we to omit the honourable mention of a distinguished benefactor, the late Mr. Thomas Hawkes, who, after giving, for several successive years, a handsome donation to the Society, (concealing his name, except from the treasurer,) presented, a few days before his sudden death, the sum of *a thousand pounds*. In addition to this, he has bequeathed to our Institution *two thousand pounds* stock in the four per cents., which, by the liberality of his executors, has already been transferred to us. With this princely generosity did Mr. Hawkes communicate of that substance which he had acquired by the blessing of God on his affairs, and he has thereby exhibited to the Christian world an example of pious munificence, which it is hoped will be imitated by many of the affluent. Several other persons have also, by their legacies, devoted a portion of their wealth to this Institution, by which, though dead, they yet contribute to the cause of Christ, and the happiness of mankind. These instances of benevolence will not, we trust, tend to relax the exertions of our Brethren in town or country, but rather excite them to greater zeal and diligence; for as our Missions are multiplied, and many more labourers are called for, especially in South Africa and in the east, the Society will require, notwithstanding the utmost economy in the management of their

affairs, an augmented income, to meet the constantly growing expenditure. Could we prevail on every congregation connected with us, (where it is practicable,) to make an annual collection, as is the laudable custom of some, our operations would be proportionably extended, and the Directors might look forward to numerous Missions, which they have scarcely had the courage to contemplate.

The cause is the Lord's. He who suffered on the cross, that he might become the Saviour of the world, has strictly commanded his disciples to proclaim his great salvation to every human being. By the help of God, let us endeavour to do this. As yet we have done but little. We may say, to-day, as the venerable and victorious leader of Israel did when retiring from the world—"There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." While, therefore, the great Disposer of life continues our active powers, and while he indulges us with the privilege of devoting a portion of our substance to him, let us proceed, with renewed vigour, in the delightful work: and let us stir up the rising generation to join us in it; that so, when those of us who had the happiness of commencing this Society shall cease from our labours, our posterity may continue the work, with superior wisdom, zeal, and success, till they behold "Satan falling as lightning from heaven;" till they exultingly shout—"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."

(To be continued.)

DOMESTIC.

Report of the Directors of the Northern Missionary Society.

It is with mingled sentiments of gratitude and humility before GOD, that the Board address the General Society upon the return of another anniversary. Some difficulties have arisen which have retarded the success of the mission; but still, under the good providence of God, our missionaries have maintained their station at Oneida.

The orders of the Society in regard to Anthony Adgaquid, and Abram the Indian, recommended by Mr. Jenkins, have been obeyed. The former, in Mr. Mairs' family, has been furnished with clothes to the amount of \$20; and from the report of his teacher, he appears worthy the particular attention of the Society. The latter has received presents, in a bible and blanket, to the amount of 5 dollars 12 1-2 cents. The board would suggest the propriety of continuing attention to this old Indian.

Two houses, one for the residence of the missionaries, and the other for the accommodation of teaching, have been erected or repaired by our missionaries; the expense of which amounted to \$187. 25. which the Board has ordered to be paid.

The constitution, as amended, together with the last annual report, names of officers, &c. was printed, and copies transmitted to the New-York and Hampshire Missionary Societies.

None of the occupants of the lands granted by the legislature have applied to the treasurer for leases; nor has the committee applied to the legislature for relief. Would it not be well either to renounce these lands altogether, or take some effectual measures for securing their income?

At the recommendation of Dr. Basset, immediately after the annual meeting of 1809, the committee of missions employed Mr. Andrew Vandenberg, as a school-master and catechist, at the salary of 250 dollars a year. In May last, he reported that he had not been very successful, he being obliged to be absent for some time, and when present, the necessities and perverseness of the Indians prevented a general attendance on his instructions: He, however, expressed a willingness to make further attempts or not, as the Board deemed most eligible, and they directed him to continue in the employment until the present meeting of the Society. He has, since that period, been more successful in obtaining pupils. We refer you to his journal, which, however, gives no account of the progress of his pupils, or of the method of instruction which he has adopted.

Mr. Jenkins has continued in the performance of his duties as preacher, catechist, and school-master, at Oneida and Squasselow. It appears from his journal, that he understands the meaning of almost every word in the language of the Indians, but is yet unacquainted with its inflections and government. He is preparing to preach in their vernacular tongue, which will save the expense, and avoid the unfaithfulness of such interpreters as can now be obtained, and we trust, will greatly promote his usefulness among his hearers.

Mr. Jenkins reports the following to be the state of the church among the Indians, viz.

Number of communicants,	24
Received last year,	5
Baptised, about	40

Agreeable to permission, Mr. Jenkins has preached to the people of Sullivan about once in six weeks. He has not yet received any contributions, but they have promised the Society 30 or 40 dollars for his services.

The people of Lenox and Smithfield, formerly the town of Sullivan, have petitioned for a part of our missionary's services, and have subscribed sixty dollars, and probably will contribute more. It comes strictly within the design of this Society to send missionaries to the frontier settlements; and the Board are of opinion, that a part of Mr. Jenkins' time may be profitably employed in the above mentioned places.

On the whole, prospects are gloomy; the designs of unprincipled whites, and some other difficulties, have prevented the success which was hoped. We would still, however, be found in the way of duty, and look to GOD for his presence and blessing.

JOHN M. BRADFORD, }
JOHN L. ZABRISKIE, } Committee.

Albany, 4th September, 1810.

Extract from the Minutes of the General Association of New Hampshire.

The following report on the state of religion was read and accepted.

The Committee appointed by the General Association of New Hampshire to draw up a report, relative to the state of religion within their bounds, and the bounds of their connexions, have comprised what they deemed necessary in the following statement.

The portion of country, over which our churches are scattered, is too extensive to admit of a detailed account of the local and peculiar circumstances, by which they are severally distinguished. To present a few facts, both of a dark and luminous nature, is all that can now be accomplished.

From the information received by the Delegates, of the different Associations belonging to this body, it appears that a dark cloud is hanging over various parts of our Zion. There are many congregations ; many precious souls, who, notwithstanding the benevolent exertions which have been made to supply their wants, are yet destitute of the common means of salvation. There are many illiterate teachers, who, with much zeal, profess to lead others into the path of light, while they themselves do not carefully distinguish it from the way of darkness. There are also within the bounds of our Associations, many persons who are grossly inattentive to the Scriptures of truth, which alone are able to make us wise unto salvation ; many who are chargeable with open profanation of the Lord's day ; who, instead of employing it in the duties and exercises of religion, spend it in the pursuits of business, or in scenes of idleness and dissipation ; many who openly disregard all the ordinances and institutions of religion. In a word, there are many, who depart from the faith once delivered to the saints, and eagerly embrace doctrines, and pursue practices, subversive of Christianity.

This dark, impending cloud, we cannot expect will be removed, till we pray with more fervency, and make greater exertions in the cause of truth. The Lord will come and bless us, when we suitably desire his gracious advent, and are prepared for his blessing. For this, he will be inquired of by the house of Israel.

But while so much darkness overspreads our churches, we congratulate the friends of Zion, that we have reason to be thankful for the special beams of grace, which God has shed upon some of our Churches, in the course of the last year. In Newport, Croydon, and some other places, a deep attention to Divine things has prevailed ; and many souls have been hopefully converted to the truth. In other parts of the State, where no special revival has appeared, an increased regard to the public ordinances of religion has been observed ; and hopes have been excited that God was about to arise, and build up his cause. Missionary labors have been performed in various parts of the State, with apparent success.

In our sister churches, the Redeemer's kingdom is advancing. In Middlebury College, and its vicinity ; and in several other places in Vermont ; and in the counties of Essex and Worcester in Massachusetts, the God of grace has, we humbly trust, bowed the hearts of many to the sceptre of Jesus.

In tracing the gracious footsteps of Providence from north to south, we are presented with the precious tokens of Divine love. In several parts of Connecticut, that favoured section of the Church, many have lately been gathered into the fold of the great Shepherd. In the middle and southern States, where the smiles of Heaven attend the Presbyterian connexion, we find much reason to bless God for the rich effusion of his grace in the recent conversion of sinners.

Thus, while we lament the degenerate state of our country, we have great cause to thank God for the display of his mercy. Though much

moral darkness has long brooded over the extensive region, which our Associations and Presbyteries inhabit, yet the Sun of Righteousness has pierced the cloud, dispelled the gloom, and, upon many places, shines with increasing lustre.

Through the medium of Missionaries, employed by various Societies, we are informed that the barren wilderness begins to bud and blossom as the rose.

On the whole, we find no reason to sink into discouragement, nor to slacken our efforts. God rules over all; he holds every being and event in his hand; and will make all things conspire to overturn the kingdom of Satan, and to usher in the universal reign of the Redeemer. Let us then gird up the loins of our minds, and watch unto prayer; for he is faithful who has promised. Let us fervently co-operate with the great Head of the Church in accomplishing his glorious purposes. Let us be steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. (*Panoplist.*)

Preaching in the Hospital and Alms-House, in this City.

THE Alms-House, in this city, contains from ten to twelve hundred souls, and the Hospital about two hundred persons, who are continually changing. The spiritual interests of both these places have too long been lamentably neglected. We rejoice that the Gospel is now regularly preached to the poor in these melancholy abodes, and fervently pray that it may be blessed to the salvation of multitudes among them. The following is the plan which has been matured, and has thus far met with the wished for encouragement.

New-York, November 19, 1810.

We, the subscribers, being desirous of extending the blessings of a preached Gospel to the poor, in the Hospital and Alms-House, in the city of New-York, do hereby agree to pay annually, on the first day of January, the sums annexed to our names respectively, towards the attainment of that object, reserving to ourselves the liberty of withdrawing our subscriptions at our pleasure, and agreeing that if they be not withdrawn before the last day of December, they shall remain obligatory for the year following. We agree that the Rev. *Ezra Stiles Ely* shall be employed from the date hereof, as a stated preacher to the Hospital and Alms-House, in consequence of this subscription, and that the monies subscribed shall be payable to his order. In the event of his death or resignation, a successor shall be appointed by the subscribers, assembled by public notice, until a different arrangement shall be made by the subscribers so assembled. The surplus, if any shall be subscribed and paid above the sum of fifteen hundred dollars, shall be paid over to the New-York Bible Society; for the ascertaining of which, the preacher, for the time being, shall make an annual report to the Clergy subscribing this agreement, of all subscription monies received by him."

We cannot but hope that the time is not far distant when the State-Prison, Bridewell, and the Debtors' Jail, in this city, will be also blessed with the glad tidings of great joy.